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own share in terminologic discussion. Later I may comment upon certain points, *e. g.*, the alleged 'obscurities of the system' (which—in view of my long preaching and practise of clearness as the first essential of all scientific composition—you must pardon me for regarding as subjective), and the nature and extent of my philologic transgressions (in which connection I may refer to a paper read, by invitation, before the American Philological Association last winter). Now, in view of the fact that all my publications upon the subject either have been sent you or are otherwise accessible, I must express surprise and regret that the foot-note (translated from His) should cite only three of my less extended contributions (two of them privately printed), without mentioning the earlier, the later and the more comprehensive, *e. g.*, the article 'Anatomical Terminology' by S. H. Gage and myself, in the first edition of the 'Reference Handbook of the Medical Sciences,' 1889, our 'Anatomical Technology,' 1882 and 1897, my 'Neural Terms, International and National' (*Journal of Comparative Neurology*, 1896), and 'Some Misapprehensions as to the Simplified Nomenclature of Anatomy' (1898), *SCIENCE*, April 21, 1899. The several reports of the committees of the Association of American Anatomists, the American Neurological Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science should have been specified, and it would have been simple justice to name Mrs. Gage, Gerrish, Gould, Huntington, Leidy, the Spitzkas, father and son, and others. Finally, American students should be aware that the subject was definitely brought before the American Association for the Advancement of Science as long ago as 1880, and that a committee of that body was appointed in 1884, three years prior to the date when, as stated by you, 'Germany took the lead.'

In my 'Neural Terms' and 'Some Misapprehensions' I tried to give due credit to earlier simplifiers, Barclay, Owen, Henle, etc. When you and some other anatomists in this country take equal pains to inform yourselves fully as to the facts and principles involved, I believe you will concede that the good and en-

during features of the neurologic portion of the [B N A] had been previously adopted or proposed by me, and you will realize that the unprejudiced consideration of the terms preferred by me would have been more advantageous to anatomy and more creditable to yourselves than their premature condemnation.

A copy of this letter will be sent to *SCIENCE* and *American Medicine*.

Very truly yours,

BURT G. WILDER.

October 11, 1906.

#### LEFT-HANDEDNESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF *SCIENCE*: The question of right-handedness has been brought to my notice, and I should like to inquire whether any of your readers has actually counted the number of left-handed men and women in a tribe. Very few implements of savagery are reliable witnesses. The throwing sticks of Eskimo men and the short-handed skin dressers of the women are infallible, since they fit only one hand. In the National Museum, among a great number of throwing sticks—from east Greenland to Sitka, only two are left-handed and both are from the same locality. There is not a left-handed woman's implement in the museum.

O. T. MASON.

October 20, 1906.

#### SPECIAL ARTICLES.

THE RELATIVE MERITS OF THE 'ELIMINATION' AND 'FIRST SPECIES' METHOD IN FIXING THE TYPES OF GENERA—WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ORNITHOLOGY.

IN attempting to fix the types of any group of genera we shall find that a large number are monotypic, another lot have had their types designated by their authors, a few are fixed by the rule of tautonomy<sup>1</sup> and a certain number are left without any indication of a type—usually complex heterogeneous genera of the older authors. It is these that are always giving us trouble and these alone with which the problem of fixing types is concerned.

It seems to me that it is the duty of those engaged in nomenclatural work to-day to establish our names on as firm a basis as pos-

<sup>1</sup> See *SCIENCE*, V., No. 16, pp. 114–115, July 18, 1902.